Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE — Radio Service — OFFICE OF INFORMATION

1.9
In3Hn

Housekeepers' Chat — Monday, October 22, 1928

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: Mother Nature's Medicine Chest. Program includes menu and recipes, from Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

---ooOoo---

There is so much to do today, that I hardly know where to begin. I have a menu, and a recipe, and all sorts of questions. Here's an important letter which I haven't had time to answer by mail:

"Dear Aunt Sammy: One time I heard you give a talk on food for children, in which you said that bowlegs and decaying teeth may be caused by the lack of certain minerals. I did not hear all of the talk, and I do not know whether you told about any tonics, or not. Could you please give me some advice on this subject?"

I remember the talk I made, on the value of minerals in the diet, but I am quite sure that I did not mention any tonics. I did say that bowlegs and bad teeth are often caused by the lack of certain minerals -- calcium and phosphorus -- in the diet. I also said that children will get all the calcium and phosphorus they need, in a daily diet which includes milk, eggs, vegetables, fruit, whole-grain cereals, and butter or cream. A pint of milk a day provides three-fourths of the needed calcium, and half the phosphorus.

Vegetables are next in importance. Vegetables differ in their mineral content, but if children eat such vegetables as spinach, Swiss chard, dandelion greens, celery, and carrots, in addition to potatoes, you may feel sure that vegetables are doing their duty, in supplying your children with minerals. An egg a day also helps to furnish these minerals. Fruits, too, are excellent sources of calcium and phosphorus. So are the whole-grain cereals, such as oatmeal and graham bread.

Children, particularly, need foods which build teeth, bones, blood, and other parts of the body. They need foods rich in minerals. But instead of buying mineral tonics, why not buy the foods which contain these minerals? In Mother Nature's medicine chest, we can find at least 50 vegetables, and almost as many fruits. Besides minerals, these foods contain the vitamins we need for health, and for normal growth and development of the body. Among the leafy vegetables which are considered especially valuable for vitamins and minerals, are spinach, cabbage, lettuce, beet tops, kale, chard, dandelion greens, and many more. These green-leaf vegetables, and tomatoes, lemons, grapefruit, and oranges, because of the vitamins they contain, are recommended especially for growing young people, though they are needed by everybody.

Does that answer your question? I'll send you two or three bulletins on

normal diets, and meal-planning, which are published by the Bureau of Home Economics, at Washington, D. C.

The next question-- No, I think we'd better write the menu next. Otherwise there may not be time for it. I see the Menu Specialist has planned a dinner which is rich in minerals. She must have known we were interested in minerals this morning.

The menu includes a Spanish Omelet; Fresh Shell Beans, or Black-eyed Peas; Lettuce Salad with French Dressing; Sliced Oranges; and Oatmeal Cookies.

Now let me think a minute. I'm sure there are recipes in the Radio Cookbook for all sorts of omelets, and for at least three Tomato Sauces, including a Spanish Sauce. A plain omelet becomes a Spanish Omelet after it's had a Spanish Sauce poured over it. So that's that. And don't forget that the secret of a perfect omelet is to cook it at a moderate temperature.

Now somebody might want to know how to make a French Dressing, for the Lettuce Salad. I'm sorry there is no French Dressing Recipe in the Radio Cookbook. Let's see, what does a French Dressing consist of? Oil, vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper. That's all. Maybe I can give you a recipe for French Dressing, <u>without</u> a cookbook. Five ingredients, for French Dressing. Let's say:

3 tablespoons of oil
1 or 2 tablespoons of vinegar, depending on how sour it is
1/2 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt, and
A little paprika.

Once more, the five ingredients for French Dressing: (Repeat)

I hope nobody spelled out those long words. Always use a big T for tablespoon, and a small t for teaspoon. It saves time. When you combine the ingredients, be sure the oil is cold. Beat the ingredients with a fork, until they are well blended. Or, place them in a wide-mouthed bottle, cork it tightly, and shake well before serving.

If I were serving this lettuce salad, I'd add a tablespoon of crumbled Roquefort cheese to the plain salad dressing.

The next recipe you might need is for Oatmeal Cookies, and I'm very glad to say <u>that</u> recipe is in the Radio Cookbook, for it includes 10 or 12 ingredients, and I will not be responsible for any Oatmeal Drop Cookie which has 10 or 12 things in it. Mighty good cookie, by the way. Made with raisins, and nuts, and cinnamon.

Please check over the menu, while I read it again: Spanish Omelet; Fresh Shell Beans or Black-eyed Peas; Lettuce Salad with French Dressing; Sliced Oranges and Oatmeal Cookies.

Back to questions and answers now. Well, well! Look who's here! Our old standby: "What's wrong with the meringue on my lemon pie?" No, this says custard pie -- that helps some. This question pops up at least three times a week, in some form or other.

Today it takes this form: "Why are the meringues on my custard pies tough and leathery?"

Too hot an oven is the reason. Egg white coagulates at a very low temperature and toughens at a high temperature. You will get the best results from baking your meringue in a slow oven, for about 20 minutes.

Next question: "Please tell me how to improve the taste of a prune pie?"

Prune pies are improved by the addition of a small amount of lemon juice, and possibly the grated rind of part of the lemon. Some cooks thicken the prune juice. Nuts may be added if liked. Prune pie is always improved by serving whipped cream with it to give richness.

Next: "Is there any way to keep celery from turning dark between Saturday and Sunday noon?"

Perhaps you leave the celery in the water too long. Try leaving the celery in cold water for an hour or two, to "crisp" it, then wrap the celery in a clean, moist cloth until it is needed. Or you may prefer to put the celery away, as you buy it from the store, until about two hours before using it. Then crisp it in cold water, and clean it.

Next: "Why does an aluminum pancake griddle stick with buckwheat cakes only?"

Maybe there is not enough fat in the pancake batter. Increase the quantity of fat in the recipe, and see if this corrects the difficulty.

Next: "Are bananas a healthful food for young children?

Ripe bananas, that is, those which are yellow all over, and have no green tips, may be safely given to healthy young children. Baked bananas are also good for children.

The last question is from a listener who wants a new sandwich, to serve at afternoon teas, and the like.

Why not make Orange and Honey sandwiches? For Orange and Honey filling, you need 4 tablespoons -- don't spell it out! Big T for tablespoon! Let's begin again. Four ingredients, for Orange and Honey Sandwiches:

4 tablespoons grated orange rind
4 tablespoons thick honey
1/8 teaspoon salt, and
Butter

Wash the oranges, and grate the yellow portion. Mix with the honey, and add the salt. Cut the bread into thin slices, remove the crust, and cover the bread with softened butter. Spread the filling on one side, and press the slices together.

Tomorrow: "What To Do When Your Child Is Hurt."